

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST ORTHODOX CHURCH

Orthodox Church of America

A Parish of the Diocese of New York and New Jersey

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November 22, 2020

24th Sunday after Pentecost - Tone 7
Apostles of the Seventy Philemon and Archippus.

- 9:10 am - Hours
- 9:30 am - Divine Liturgy
Eph. 2:14-22
Luke 12:16-21

Schedule of Services

Tuesday, November 24

- 7:00 pm - Akathist to Saint John, Forerunner and Baptist of the Lord.

Thursday, November 26

- 9:00 am - Thanksgiving Moleben
(At Church)

Friday, November 27

- 7:00 pm - Moleben to the Most Holy Theotokos:

Saturday, November 28

- 5:00 pm - Great Vesper

Sunday, November 29

- 9:10 - Hours
- 9:30 - Divine Liturgy



WEEKLY BIBLE MESSAGE

We celebrate the feast of the Entry of the Most-Holy Theotokos into the Temple. The coming of Jesus Christ into the world is so important that everything surrounding it, including the event this feast commemorates, is also important.

For years before Jesus' birth, His Mother was prepared for her role. While she was still very young, her parents and neighbors took her to the Temple, singing holy songs and carrying candles. She walked up the steps of the Temple and was met by the high priest. She entered the Holy of Holies with him as a sign of her special destiny. Normally nobody entered that place except the high priest, and that only once a year. Then Mary grew up and matured spiritually among holy people, until God was ready to send His Son to us and to have her give Him birth.

We celebrate and revere the people and events surrounding the Incarnation because we believe it alone tells the truth about God. Only Christians teach that God's Divine Son came among us to offer us life through His death and resurrection. That is why we can't go along with those who say that every religion is basically the same, and leads to God.

Among those who say this is Rick Steves, the well-known travel writer and TV personality. Though Steves is a committed and community-serving Lutheran, he apparently shares the idea that all religions are equal and the same.

He describes with admiration a man he met in a remote Turkish village. The man had an embroidered bag hanging in a place of honor on a wall of his small house. The bag, he told Steves, contained a copy of the Qu'ran as well as a Bible and a copy of the Talmud.

Though a devout Muslim himself, the man felt that he honored all three faiths by keeping their holy Scriptures together in one bag.

This man is an example, Steves writes, of the way we should all be. How appropriate, how good a symbol of unity it would be if we could all have bags with the various holy Scriptures in them.

But the feast of the Entry of the Most-Holy Theotokos into the Temple reminds us that Christians cannot settle for such a tidy solution to the problem of spiritual disunity among human beings. We are not "people of the Book." We worship a God who did infinitely more than give us a sacred Scripture. He was born from the long-prepared Mary as a Man, and when grown He burst the walls of hell asunder. If hell could not contain Him, certainly a bag can't do it.

Our own Scriptures tell us that Jesus Christ came to save everyone, not just those who call themselves His followers. We must love and respect those of other faiths, and need to work at finding common ground with them. But we also have to show them the Man who died on the cross for them—the Man who just won't fit in that bag.

Troparion - Tone 4

Today Anna bequeaths joy to all instead of sorrow by bringing forth her fruit, the only ever-Virgin. In fulfillment of her vow, today with joy she brings to the temple of the Lord the true temple and pure Mother of God the Word.

Kontakion - Tone 4

Today the universe is filled with joy at the glorious feast of the Mother of God, and cries out: "She is the heavenly heavenly tabernacle."

Intercessory Prayers

We pray for all our fellow parishioners, and we pray especially for those who are incapable of being with us in church. Please keep in your prayers our Brothers and Sisters in Christ: Genevieve Bobenko, Barbara Bogart, Michael Bzik, Mary Ann Dolak, Dorothy Fabian, Barbara Kary, Margaret Kovalycsik, Kathleen Lazarczyk, Dennis Maixner, Marian Nagel, MaryAnn Rabakozl, Helen Rahnefeld, Anna Rozanovich, Maryann Stagen, Eva Stashitsky, Patricia Galley.

Birthday Greeting

Happy Birthday go out this week to **Matushka Svitlana** – Nov. 24. May God continue to enrich Her life with the fullness of joy and happiness for many years – Mnogaya Lyeta!

Our Parish Life

♦ **The Nativity Fast** (Advent) has started and will end December 24th (after Christmas Eve Liturgy). We are to fast from meat and dairy. In order for fasting to be effective, it must be accompanied with prayer and acts of mercy and love. St. John Chrysostom reminds us: "What good is it to fast from meat and dairy, if we devour and eat one another." Please remember to love and forgive in this special time in which we prepare for the birth of our Savior Jesus Christ.

♦ **Memory Eternal.** His Holiness, Irinej (Gavrilovic) the archbishop of Pec, metropolitan of Belgrade-Karlovci, and patriarch of the Serbian Orthodox Church, reposed in the Lord Friday morning November 20/2020 in Belgrade after contracting COVID-19. His Holiness was 90 years old. **Vechaya Pamyat!**

♦ **The flowers** adorning the icon of the Feast of Entrance of the Most Holy Theotokos on the center tetrapod were given by **Maryann Stagen**. We sincerely thank her with prayers for God's blessing always.

